

Exhibit L

The Enterprise Newspaper Article titled “Legislation would create state regulations for mixed martial arts”

The Enterprise

Legislation would create state regulations for mixed martial arts



Jack Encarnacao

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Massachusetts has begun the process of opening the door to mixed martial arts, a sport that could be regulated here in time for the hosting of an Ultimate Fighting Championship event next summer. (Watch all three of our mixed martial arts videos.)

Massachusetts has begun the process of opening the door to mixed martial arts, a sport that could be regulated here in time for the hosting of an Ultimate Fighting Championship event next summer.

The state Senate voted Tuesday to approve regulations for the sport. Without such regulations in place, the industry-leading UFC organization will not stage one of its shows – shows that can generate millions of dollars in tourist spending.

Taxes, fines and regulations \$25,000 – Maximum fine for competing in a professional match without a license. 4 percent – Percentage of gross ticket sales collected as a tax by state athletic commission. The average gate for an Ultimate Fighting Championship event last year was \$3 million. 4 – Minimum weight, in ounces, of gloves allowed for MMA bouts. Boxing requires 8-ounce gloves. 5 – Maximum number of allowed rounds in a mixed-martial arts bout. 18 – Minimum age for a licensed MMA fighter; 35 is the maximum without a special license. 16 – Minimum age for a spectator for an MMA event in Massachusetts unless accompanied by an adult. \$98,998 – Amount, including expenses, paid in 2008 and 2009 by the UFC to Dewey Square Group, a Boston lobbying firm, to push for regulation of the sport at the State House. 200 – Number of UFC employees needed to set up an event. \$775,000 – State tax revenue a UFC-commissioned study says a single event would produce. Source: State Senate legislation, HR&A Inc. economic impact study, secretary of state.

Forty states have passed laws sanctioning the sport.

“I think that the sport’s growing, and the ... state is realizing that it is of a veritable financial interest to the state,” said Scott Lockhart of Abington, who co-owns the South Shore Sports Fighting MMA gym in Rockland. “I think most people are for it.”

Under the bill, the state would collect 4 percent of the ticket-sales revenue from a mixed martial arts event. The state also would collect a maximum of \$75,000 for each televised event that takes place in Massachusetts.

The Las Vegas-based UFC averaged \$3 million in ticket sales in 13 events last year in the United States, Canada, Ireland and England. A show set for next month in Philadelphia, headlined by Massachusetts native Kenny Florian, has already produced \$3 million in ticket sales.

If the proposed legislation passes, the UFC will try to run an event here in the summer of 2010, said Marc Ratner, UFC’s vice president of regulatory affairs.

The bill was filed by Sen. James Timilty, D-Walpole. Sen. Robert Hedlund, R-Weymouth, spoke in support of it on the Senate floor Tuesday. The senate voted 34-1 to approve it, with Sen. Marian Walsh, D-Boston, the lone dissenter.

The bill now moves to the House Ways and Means Committee. Timilty said there is no indication that the bill will not receive the needed approvals.

“Everybody seemed unanimous that this is something that we needed,” he said. “They realize that this, as a sport of the future, does need some sensible regulation. This will be an excellent way of generating revenue without raising taxes.”

Despite a lack of regulation, mixed martial arts events are still held in Massachusetts, including regular bouts in Plymouth. Promoters mostly police themselves, hiring their own doctors, referees and judges.

Those duties would be taken over by the state boxing commission, to which the governor would appoint two new members, one with a specialty in mixed martial arts.

In addition to codifying mixed martial arts, the legislation also bumps up insurance requirements for those who promote boxing and kickboxing matches in the state.

Under the proposed legislation, professional fighters would have to be licensed. The bill defines a professional fighter as “a person who competes for money or other pecuniary gain.” It prohibits “tough-man or similar type matches or exhibitions.”

The legislation differs from other states’ in a significant way. An amendment added Tuesday, at the request of Sen. Mark Pacheco, D-Taunton, gives each city and town the authority to vote on whether to allow a mixed martial arts event.

UFC’s Ratner said that although the provision is unusual, the organization would be “happy to meet with any city there and educate them about the economic benefits and the health and safety benefits.”

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